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# **MELT HR001122S0017**

## **Proposers Day**

**February 18, 2022**

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# Proposers Day Disclaimer

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- **Lots of information is made available to potential proposers to clarify program goals/objectives and proposal preparation instructions - those things that are stipulated in the BAA**

## **However:**

- Only the information/instructions in the BAA counts
- Proposals will only be evaluated in accordance with the instructions provided in the BAA
- Any response provided by the Government in the FAQ that's different than what is provided in the BAA will be made formal by an amendment to the BAA
  - Such responses will make note of an impending BAA amendment

**Only a duly authorized Contracting Officer may obligate the Government**



# BAA Overview

- **BAAs allow for a variety of technical solutions**

- The BAA defines the problem set, the proposer defines the solution (and SOW)
- Allows for multiple award instrument types:

- Procurement Contract or Other Transaction
- Anticipated Funding Type: **6.3 (Advanced Technology Development)**
  - Restricted research for all team members (prime or subcontractor)
  - Research will be classified (involve access to or generation of classified info) – this will impact teaming

- **Attachment 3 to BAA: MELT CUI Guide**

- **DARPA Scientific Review Process**

- Proposals are evaluated on individual merit and relevance as it relates to the stated research goals/objectives rather than against one another
- Selections will be made to proposers whose proposals are determined to be most advantageous to the Government, all factors considered, including potential contributions to research program and availability of funding
- **Government may select for negotiation all, some, one, or none of the proposals received**
- **Government may accept proposals in their entirety or select only portions thereof**
- **Government may elect to establish portions of proposal as options**



# BAA Process/Timeline

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1. BAA published: 28 January
2. Proposers Day: 18 February
3. Request for CUI, SCG, and Classified Addendums (Attachment 4 and 5):  
**22 February**
4. Abstracts Due: **8 March**
4. Government Abstract Responses: ~ end of March
5. Proposals Due: **2 May**
6. Proposals are reviewed for BAA compliance  
*Noncompliant proposals are not reviewed (and cannot be selected)*
7. Government conducts Scientific Review Process  
*Clarification requests may be sent to various proposers*
8. Government sends out notification letters: ~ July 2022
9. Contracts negotiated & awarded (performance start): ~ October 2022  
**(can assume 1 October 2022 for Pricing)**

**See BAA for complete date/time information**  
**Monitor SAM.gov for any BAA amendment(s)**



# Eligibility Issues

- All interested/qualified sources may respond subject to the parameters outlined in BAA
- Foreign participants/resources may participate to the extent allowed by applicable Security Regulations, Export Control Laws, Non-Disclosure Agreements, etc.  
**(Classified addendums are expected – this impacts teaming)**
- FFRDCs and Government entities:
  - Are not prohibited by the BAA from proposing
  - Are, however, subject to applicable direct competition limitations
  - Are, however, required to demonstrate eligibility (sponsor letter)
  - The burden to prove eligibility for all such team members rests with the proposer
  - All elements of a proposal (tech and cost, prime and subs – even FFRDC team members) must be included in the prime's submission
- Real and/or Perceived Conflicts of Interest:
  - Identify any conflict/s
  - If any are identified, a mitigation plan must be included



# Proposal Abstracts (1 of 2)

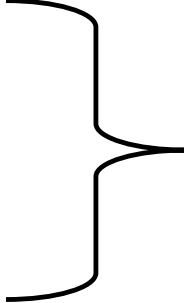
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- **Abstracts are highly encouraged:**
  1. They minimize unnecessary effort in proposal preparation and review
  2. They reduce the potential expense of preparing an out of scope proposal
  
- **The abstract provides a synopsis of the proposed project (tech and budget)**
  
- **Government will reply by letter with one of two possible responses:**
  1. Encourage full proposal, and may provide feedback
  2. Discourage full proposal, and will provide rational
    - DARPA will not communicate further (verbally or in writing)
  
- **Regardless of DARPA's response to an abstract, proposers may submit a full proposal**
  - DARPA will review all full proposals submitted without regard to abstract recommendation/feedback



## Proposal Abstracts (2 of 2)

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- Abstracts should be submitted as two separate submissions - an unclassified abstract with a classified addendum
- Abstracts must include the following components:
  - Cover Sheet
  - Innovative Claims
  - Technical Approach
  - Deliverables
  - Cost and Schedule

**Max of 8 pages**

*The total page limit does not include the cover sheet (required) or a submission letter (optional)*
- Submit UNCLASS submissions to the DARPA BAA Website (<https://baa.darpa.mil>) per the instructions in Section IV.C.2, “Abstract Submission Information,” of the BAA.
- Submit Classified addendums to DARPA per Section IV.B.4, “Security Information” of the BAA



# Full Proposal Ground Rules

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- **KEY POINTS:**

- One Technical Area; address all phases and metrics
- A proposer can submit multiple proposals
- An organization/company/individual can be on multiple proposals
- Submit unclassified proposals ONLY to the DARPA BAA Website (<https://baa.darpa.mil>)
  - Click “Finalize Full Proposal” button (otherwise you have not submitted)
- Submit classified proposal addendum to DARPA per “Security Information” section of the BAA
  - Do not submit classified proposals/information to the DARPA BAA Website
  - If unsure, please ask questions (well before the proposal due date)

**Propose to the program (goals, objectives, metrics, schedule, deliverables)**  
**the BAA has defined not to the program you desire**





# Full Proposal Preparation

## ● Volume 1: Technical/Management Proposal

- Be mindful of the page limitations
- Be sure to respond to all **12** of the required “Detailed Proposal Information” items
  - Technical Approach – is the centerpiece of the technical proposal
  - Statement of Work – **Organize by Phase, then by Tasks**. Define all tasks (what you are doing, not how you are doing it) and deliverables (data, software, and material items, as applicable).

## ● Volume 2: Cost Proposal

- No page limitations
- Fully detailed cost build-ups/estimates (**Prime & Subcontractors**)(**All instrument types**)
  - Summary Cost Build-up: By phase and performer fiscal year
  - Detailed Cost Build-up: By phase, technical task, and month
  - **See Note 4 (this is new to all DARPA BAAs): DARPA Standard Cost Proposal Spreadsheet**
- All necessary supporting information (BoE, BoM, vendor quotes, rate agreements, etc.)
- **Subcontractor proposals are required (to include SOW)**
- **No Rough Order of Magnitudes (ROMs)**

**Keep an eye out for proposal preparation guidance in the “Funding Opportunity Description”**



# Full Proposal Preparation

## Volume 2: Cost Proposal

### Note 4 – DARPA Standard Cost Proposal Spreadsheet

The Government strongly encourages\* that proposers use the provided MS Excel™ DARPA Standard Cost Proposal Spreadsheet in the development of their cost proposals. A customized cost proposal spreadsheet may be an attachment to this solicitation. If not, the spreadsheet can be found on the DARPA website at <http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/contract-management> (under “Resources” on the right-hand side of the webpage). All tabs and tables in the cost proposal spreadsheet should be developed in an editable format with calculation formulas intact to allow traceability of the cost proposal. This cost proposal spreadsheet should be used by the prime organization and all subcontractors. In addition to using the cost proposal spreadsheet, the cost proposal still must include all other items required in this announcement that are not covered by the editable spreadsheet. Subcontractor cost proposal spreadsheets may be submitted directly to the Government by the proposed subcontractor via e-mail to the address in Part I of this solicitation. Using the provided cost proposal spreadsheet will assist the Government in a rapid analysis of your proposed costs and, if your proposal is selected for a potential award, speed up the negotiation and award execution process.

**\*have a really good reason not to use it (in addition to any other spreadsheets you typically provide or need to provide to be compliant).**

- **Use the single TA spreadsheet**
- **Do not make changes that are specifically prohibited by the instructions**
- **Questions are welcomed. Please direct them to [costproposal@darpa.mil](mailto:costproposal@darpa.mil)**



# Data Rights

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- **Government desires as few restrictions as possible - however....**
- **If asserting less than Unlimited Rights (e.g., Restrictions):**
  - Provide and justify basis of assertions using the prescribed format
  - Explain how each item will be used to support the proposed research project
  - Explain how the Government will be able to reach its program goals (including technology transition)
- ✓ The proposer (prime) must submit a Data Rights Cert covering the entire team (prime and subcontractors), as applicable
- ✓ Provide a Data Rights Cert no matter the instrument type being proposed
- ✓ **This information is assessed during evaluations (barriers to transition)**



# Pitfalls That Delay Proposal Review or Result in Non-Conforming

- **Failure to submit proposal on time - noncompliant!**
  - Proposal due date and BAA closing date are the same – so, **late is late!**
- **Failure to submit using the correct mechanism - noncompliant!**
  - Unclassified proposals ONLY to DARPA BAA website
  - Classified proposal addendums ONLY per “Security Information” section of the BAA
  - Ask questions if you have them (well before the closing date!)
- **Failure to submit both proposal volumes - noncompliant!**
  - OT proposals must also include a full cost volume (**Cost Realism is an evaluation criterion for all proposals**)
  - OT proposals must also include a detailed list of payment milestones (Milestone Plan)
- **Pages beyond the page limitation (tech prop) - pages will not be reviewed**
- **ROM/s instead of full subcontract cost proposal/s - noncompliant!**
  - “I didn’t have time to get the subcontract proposal/s” will not change the outcome
  - “My subcontractor/s would not give me a proposal” will not change the outcome



# Communications

- **Prior to Receipt of Proposals (Solicitation Phase):** No restrictions, however Gov't (PM/PCO) shall not dictate solutions or transfer technology
  - Typically handled through the FAQ
  
- **After Receipt of Proposals/Prior to Selections (Scientific Review Phase):** Limited to Contracting Officer or BAA Coordinator (with approval) to address clarifications requested by the review team
  - Proposal cannot be changed in response to clarification requests
  
- **After Selection/Prior to Award (Negotiation Phase):** Negotiations are conducted by the Contracting Officer
  - PM and/or COR typically tasked with finalizing the SOW (with PI)
  - PM and/or COR typically involved in any technical discussions (i.e., partial selection discussions)
  - Pre-award costs will not be reimbursed unless a pre-award cost agreement is negotiated prior to award
  
- **Informal Feedback Sessions (Post Selection):** May be requested/provided once the selection(s) are made
  - If made on a timely basis (~2 wks after letter), all requests will be accepted



# Referenced Links

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- <http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/contract-management#SolicitationContracting>  
(General DARPA contract management information)  
(DARPA Standard Cost Proposal Spreadsheet)
- <http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/additional-baa>  
(general BAA info pertaining to all instrument types)
- <http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/procurementcontracts>  
(info pertaining to contracts)
- <https://acquisitioninnovation.darpa.mil/>  
(info pertaining to OTs)
- <http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/rep-certs>  
(DARPA-specific reps and certs for all instrument types)  
(Note August 2020 version of 52.204-24)(Similar is required for OTs as well)